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A Biographical Study of Naomi

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Naomi

CHRONOLOGICAL SUMMARY

- I. Naomi, the grief-stricken
 - A. She lost her spouse.
 1. She left Bethlehem with her family during a famine and moved to the land of Moab (Ruth 1:2).
 2. She became a widow in Moab (Ruth 1:3).
 - B. She lost her sons.
 1. Naomi witnessed the marriage of her two sons to Orpah and Ruth, two Moabite women (Ruth 1:4).
 2. Ten years later she lost both sons in death (Ruth 1:5).
- II. Naomi, the guardian
 - A. Naomi and Ruth in Moab
 1. Naomi's despair
 - a. Naomi decided to return to Bethlehem.
 - b. Both her daughters-in-law offered to accompany her, but Naomi discouraged this, telling them to remain in Moab, for "the hand of the Lord is gone out against me" (Ruth 1:13).
 - c. Orpah took her advice and left (Ruth 1:14).
 2. Ruth's decision—Unlike Orpah, Ruth would not be put off (Ruth 1:15-16). "Entreat me not to leave thee; or to return from following after thee: for whither thou goest, I will go; and where thou lodgest, I will lodge: thy people shall be my people, and thy God my God" (Ruth 1:16).
 - B. Naomi and Ruth in Bethlehem
 1. Ruth helped Naomi secure food.
 - a. Upon reaching Bethlehem, Naomi demanded that her own neighbors and friends no longer call her by that name, but refer to her as "Mara," which means "bitter." At this time she was indeed a bitter woman (Ruth 1:13, 20-21).
 - b. Naomi let Ruth glean in the fields for food (Ruth 2:2).
 2. Naomi helped Ruth secure a family.
 - a. Upon learning that Ruth had met Boaz, a close relative of her dead husband, and a very eligible bachelor, Naomi began planning for a wedding (Ruth 2:19—3:2).
 - b. She instructed Ruth to approach Boaz and request that he fulfill his office of the kinsman redeemer, referring to his duty in caring for and even, if he himself was unmarried, to marry the widowed relative (Ruth 2:1; 3:2-9).
 - c. Boaz agreed, but informed Ruth there was a legal problem concerning an even closer kinsman redeemer (Ruth 3:10-15).
 - d. Upon her return, Naomi reassured Ruth, knowing the love and determination of Boaz (Ruth 3:16-18).

III. Naomi, the grandmother

- A. Boaz resolved the legal problem and married Ruth, who later gave birth to a boy named Obed (Ruth 4:13, 17).
- B. The overjoyed Naomi was allowed to help care for her grandson (Ruth 4:16).
- C. In the providence of God, Naomi would eventually become the great-great-grandmother of King David (Ruth 4:18-21).

STATISTICS

Spouse: Elimelech (Ruth 1:2)

Sons: Mahlon and Chilion (Ruth 1:2)

First mention: Ruth 1:2

Final mention: Ruth 4:17

Meaning of her name: "Pleasant"

Frequency of her name: Referred to 21 times

Biblical books mentioning her: One book (Ruth)

Important fact about her life: She was Ruth's mother-in-law (Ruth 1:3-6)